GRAM SEVAK

SEPTEMBER 1957

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL
19 NOV 1957
PATTUKKOTTAI
RURAL ... TRAINING CENT...

Road making in progress in Himachal Pradesh. The roads go first and are followed by better farming methods, education for children, social changes and the rest of it.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

One should produce abundant food. Let that be observed as a pious vow. The earth, indeed, is food. Ether is the eater of food. Ether is established on the earth; the earth is established on ether. Therefore food is established on food. And so he who knows and contemplates food which is based on food becomes firmly established. He becomes an enjoyer of food, commanding plenty of food. In progeny, in cattle, and in the effulgence born of sacred wisdom, he becomes great. Through renown issuing from his righteous conduct he becomes great. TAITTIRIYOPANISAD—

—Chapter Three—Lesson Nine

मज़दूर मंजिल
ग्राम सेवक

GRAM SEVAK

Bhadra-Aswin 1879
Vol. 4 September 1957 No. 2

CONTENTS

To the Extension Officers in the C.D. Programme .. 1
If I were a Project Officer .. 3
Men in the News .. 4
How to Prepare Silage .. 5
Honey on the Mount 7
Chemical Fertilizers .. 8
The Story of My Life .. 9
Hamara Desh 10
What Our Village Leaders Say 11
Points of View 13
The Story of Panchatantra .. 15
Changing Tripura 16
Her Only Son 18
Stumbling Blocks 19
Pen Friends' League .. 20
We Rule the Home and the Village 21
Thambulam 23

Editor : D. Raghavan
Cover Design : Sushil Sircar

BUSINESS NOTICE

Single Copy : 15 N.P.
Annual : Rs. 1.25

All enquiries regarding agency and rates of subscription and advertisements may be addressed to the Publications Division, Old Secretariat, Delhi-8. Editorial correspondence may be addressed to the Editor, *Gram Sevak*, Ministry of Community Development, New Delhi.

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL
19 NOV 1957
EXTENSION TRAINING CENTRE

TO THE EXTENSION OFFICERS IN THE C.D. PROGRAMME

Dear Comrade :

I have taken the hospitality of this journal during previous months to address the Gram Sevaks and the B.D.Os. While these two functionaries constitute the important links in the administrative chain from the State Headquarters down to our village people, you (Extension Officers) constitute the vital components in the Block team, because on you depends whether our programme will have a technical content in its various facets or it will merely be a chain of administrative exhortations from government with some grants-in-aid thrown in as doles to our people. By Extension Officers in this context I mean the subject-matter specialists at the Block level in—agriculture, animal husbandry, co-operation, village industries, social education, rural engineering (overseer) and public health.

Gram Sevak, as you know, has been trained to be a multi-purpose functionary. Agriculture being the vital industry in India, Gram Sevak has received fairly intensive training in the rudiments of agriculture. In other subjects he has had a training which can be considered a first-aid.

Our villages, and our people living in them, are in deficit today in every single aspect of their life. Financial assistance is no doubt important, considering the general poverty of our village people, but what is infinitely more important is assistance through which they can increase their earnings, stand on their own feet and be self-reliant as a community. This assistance can only come in the form of improved scientific techniques. Have you ever considered what it is that differentiates our people today from people in other advanced parts of the world? Have you ever considered why it is that we Indians who had the highest technology then known about three hundred years ago, should have fallen so low today in every aspect of our life that for almost everything modern we have to depend on other countries in the world ?

Let me tell you, the soil in India, the climatic conditions in India and the people in India are by no means inferior to those in the most advanced countries in the world, basically. If we have fallen low today it is because we allowed the technology we knew 300 years ago, to decay, and we failed to take advantage of the new technology that the industrial age ushered in the West with the advent of steam power. If India is to be brought back to a level with other nations, the only way it can be done is by making redoubled effort in the direction of modern technology in our life and environment.

As you know, 82 per cent. of our people live in the villages. India cannot progress unless we can make this large mass of our people move forward. It is the realisation of this that is at the back of the Community Development

programme. It is the pressing need for introduction of modern technique in the specialties which you represent, that motivated the staffing pattern we have today in the NES and CD Blocks. It is to this that you owe your existence as an Extension Officer.

We are aware that you have been trained in technical institutions which are manned by a staff who have been as inadequately trained as you are. We do not, therefore, expect miracles from you overnight. We do expect, however, that you will keep an open mind, be modest about yourself and will try to learn as much as you possibly can from the so-called uneducated village folks whom you are out to serve. Remember, it is the illiterate villagers in India who are earning the titles of Krishi Pandits and other awards, by producing more than ten times the average production per acre out of the same kind of soil and under the same climate as prevail in India. Farms maintained by Government have yet not been able to compete with the best of our cultivators either in output or in the cost of maintenance. You will find that the same holds good in the field of public health, education, village industries and other fields where the unlettered farmer's son is giving a performance surpassing by far, the highest of standards yet attained by his educated counterparts.

If I am relating all these examples to you, it is not to put you to shame. As I have told you earlier you are not at fault for the bad training you have received. I cannot even blame your teachers. We have all been victims of a sordid past. It will take us a generation or more, before we can correct the situation. I am quoting these examples only to convince you that there is no dearth of techniques or improved knowledge in India if only you will look for it in humility and with modesty. Unfortunately these advanced techniques and knowledge are now confined to a select few. In the atmosphere that prevails, there is no encouragement to the effort on the part of these few to extend their knowledge and techniques to the many around them which alone could have gone to enrich the life of the community.

The Farm Leaders' Camps which take effect from October are the first organised mass effort all over India to correct this situation. The main purpose of these camps is to bring, in the first instance, the progressive farmers of different villages together cutting across their narrow loyalties to their small villages. Such camps will enable you to learn much more on the subject of Agriculture and allied fields than you have ever known before and can imagine now. These camps, if properly conducted, will also provide a new dignity to these progressive farmers and encourage them to go ahead and extend their knowledge to others. We propose, if the first set of camps in the field of agriculture proves a success as these must, to extend our field of operation to all other fields which are being handled under the Community Development programme.

As an Extension Officer your main function, therefore, is to extend what you have learnt and which can be applied on the ground to as large a number of people as you can touch; also to pool the experiences that lie hidden in obscurity in our villages, and extend these to others in the same way. In the process we expect that you will create new comrades from amongst the village people who will be prepared to provide leadership in their respective field of specialties to their less fortunate counterparts.

The Gram Sevak being the last functionary at the village level, we expect you to function through him as your comrade, give him the guidance he needs from day-to-day. Your position at the Block level as a member of the team of equals, over which the Block Development Officer is expected to preside as a captain, will be determined strictly by how you treat the Gram Sevak as your comrade on the ground. If you treat the Gram Sevak as an equal, no power on earth can treat you otherwise. The relationship between you and the B.D.O. then will become a natural one of comrades working on a common cause. Are you functioning that way? This is the question I wanted to pose through this open letter to you.

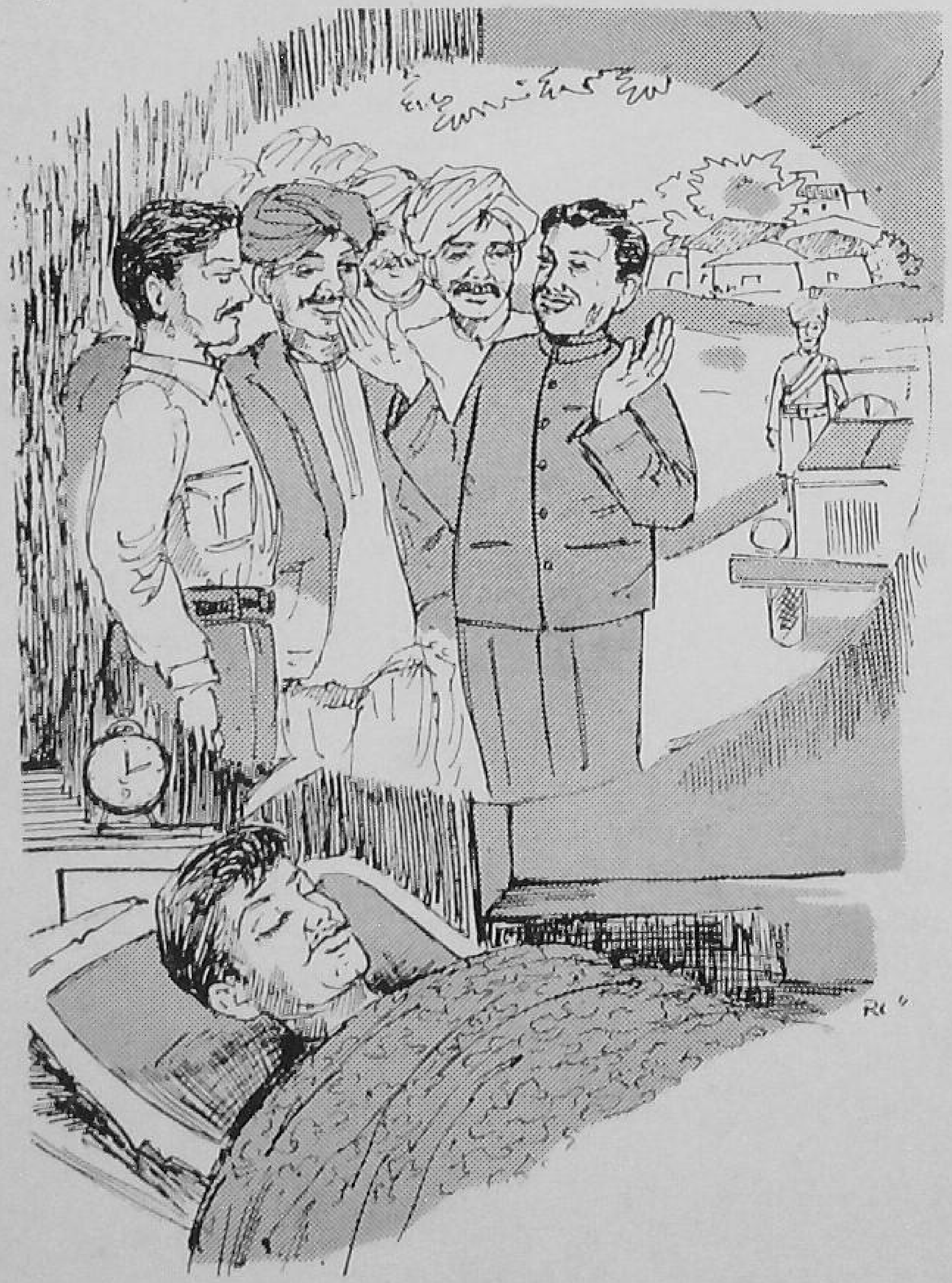
From a Farmer's Son

IF I WERE A PROJECT OFFICER

In the February issue of the *Gram Sevak* there is an article "If I Were A Gram Sevak". After reading this article, I fell asleep and had a wonderful dream.

In my dream, I saw the Prime Minister, our Minister for Development and some others whom I was unable to recognise, seated in a big hall and I saw myself standing in the middle. I was trembling and I did not know how I had reached there. But I was there in front of them. They were pointing towards me and were discussing something. In the end our Minister stood up and said, "Well, young man, (here I thought I would collapse thinking I was there for some uncommitted crime) we were just talking about you. We have come to the conclusion that you have done very good work as a Gram Sevak. To show that even a Gram Sevak can be promoted straight to the rank of a Project Executive Officer, we are mighty pleased to promote you as the Project Executive Officer of your area. Go and work hard". I tried to stammer out something. But the words stuck in my throat.

Then I saw myself in a Jeep going to the Office. The whole town was there to congratulate me. All the Gram Sevaks were also there and I addressed them. I narrated the whole story to them. I told them that I will behave towards them as before. "You can place all your grievances before me and I shall try to meet them as far as possible. Don't look upon me as an Officer. But take me as a friend. I know the difficulties. I too had to face them when I was a Gram Sevak. By mutual consultation we can find the means of solving them.



S. J. Samuel

Gram Sevak, Coyalmannum N.E.S. Block

"I will allot the Jeep for urgent works to Gram Sevaks. I will first go to his house, pick him up and then only meet the villagers. I will never boss over you. I will give due respect to the Gram Sevaks especially in presence of villagers, as I know, then only the villagers will also respect you. I will never send the Gram Sevaks on errands.

I will inform the villagers that if they have any problem, they must meet the Gram Sevak first and if he fails to solve it, they must come to see me with the Gram Sevak. Thereby the Gram Sevak will have more hold on the people.

"In official correspondence, I will never use the word "Why disciplinary action should not be taken against you", and I will never call for "Explanations". When there is a friendly behaviour, there is no use for explanations and disciplinary actions.

I also added that when visitors come to inspect the work, I will give all the credit to the Gram Sevaks. I will never tell my superiors that the Gram Sevaks are a liability to the Government and thereby discourage them. I will always encourage them in their work. All the work in the villages will be done only through the Gram Sevaks. I will call the meetings of the Gram Sevaks once in a fortnight and have a friendly discussion about their work. I will give credit to those who have done good work.

If the Gram Sevaks find it difficult to get accommodation in the villages, I will help them in finding a suitable one. I will also get them cycles on loan from the Government. I will try to make their work more easy and it will be a pleasure in the end to work as a Gram Sevak. Targets will be fixed not by me but by the Gram Sevaks. Then they will strive to achieve them. I will also spend most of the nights with the Gram Sevaks in the villages to know the difficulties of the villagers and to find out the means of solving them. I will be friendly with all the villagers whether rich or poor.

I got up with a start as somebody was knocking at my door. I opened the door and saw a ryot whose field I had selected as an experimental plot for a new strain of paddy. He came to inform me that the sowing was to be done that day.

The whole of that day I was thinking of the dream. Sometimes the dream will come true.

MEN IN THE NEWS

School Teacher Becomes a Minister

On May 17 this year, a memorable incident took place in Assam. Mr. Khelhoshe Sema, formerly a School teacher was sworn in as Deputy Minister incharge of Tribal Affairs. The story of his life is one of hard struggle. Born in 1911 in village Tsuvukhaphutomi in Mokokchung subdivision of the Naga Hills district, he came from a poor family. Though he wished to go in for higher studies, he could not do so because of the early death of his parents. At a very early age, the responsibility of taking care of his brothers and sisters fell on his shoulders. He passed his Matriculation examination in 1940. He was the first Sema student who had successfully completed his Matriculation. He worked for 9 years as an assistant teacher in a school and took active part in social welfare work. In 1942, he became the Headmaster of a Government school in NEFA. After two years, he was promoted to the post of an Assistant Sub-Inspector of Schools in 1955. Later, he was deputed to the Social Education Organisers Training Centre at Sriniketan for a course of training as SEO. After his five months' stay at the training centre, he worked for some time as a senior Liaison Officer in tribal areas. He was soon promoted to the rank of Political Assistant to the Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills and served there for about a month. During the general elections, he resigned from service and contested for the State Legislature seat as an Independent candidate. He was returned unopposed. He later joined the Congress and became a Dy. Minister in Assam.

From School Teacher to Governorship

"I started as a humble school teacher, have all along been a school teacher and am still one because I am deeply interested in education. I have been a Vice-Chancellor and have held various other positions but I still regard the position of a school teacher high because the entire work of nation-building lies in his hands", said Dr. Zakir Hussain, Governor of Bihar.

Speaking at a reception held in his honour, Dr. Zakir Hussain said that a school teacher should not impose his own ideas on his students but help them to think on the right lines.

HOW TO PREPARE SILAGE

ONE OF the difficulties, that the cattle breeders of the rural areas are faced with, is the problem of summer feeding. Very often the cattle in the villages are half-starved during the long summer months from March to June.

A similar problem used to face the European countries years back, with the only difference that their fodder scarcity was during the winter months, when no vegetative growth was possible. But soon their scientists evolved out a suitable solution, by resorting to a process designed to preserve green fodder that could be fed with great advantage during winter. This process is what is known as silage making. Silage is not a new thing to our country. But unfortunately for quite sometime it had remained a monopoly of the Government controlled farms. Recently the matter has been taken up seriously by the extension training centres.

With a view to give proper training to the Gram Sevaks in the technique of silage making, the Extension Training Centre, Bhopal, was the first to take it up. Only simple and cheap methods, that could be easily introduced in the villages by the Gram Sevaks themselves, were adopted. During the three successive years, preparation of silage was undertaken in different simple processes, and the success of it was demonstrated to the villagers round about. The following paras are based on the experience so gained, and may serve the purpose of those who desire to take up this work for the benefit of the rural cattle owners.

Silo Pits

There are various types of silo pits. The simplest and easily adaptable one under village conditions, is the *kutcha* trench silo. This is an ordinary pit dug in the earth

T. Titus

Instructor in Animal Husbandry. Extension Training Centre, Bhopal.

on a selected spot, where there is no possibility of water logging. The size of the pit is ordinarily 12 feet wide at the top, and 8 feet wide at the bottom, and 10 feet deep. The length of the pit depends upon the requirement of fodder, calculated on the basis that every foot length of the pit will have a capacity to hold one ton of silage.

When digging the pit care should be taken to ensure that the sidewalls are quite smooth and even. If any depression or hole is left out, it will retain air at the time of filling and do considerable damage to the fodder, during the formation of silage. When the pit is complete, it is advantageous to press the sidewalls by beating with a flat piece of wood, so that the freshly cut earth will be made firmer and smoother. The floor of the trench should have a slope to one end. This would allow water perculated through the fodder to drain out. The sidewalls and floor of the pit should be cowdung plastered. The pit is now ready to be filled

Selection of fodder

Silage can be prepared from any green fodder cut at its full growth. However, the best silage is obtained from fodder that contains a certain percentage of sugar. Jawar, Maize, and sugarcane tops will make most palatable silage. Ordinary grass cut fresh while in full bloom will also make good silage. But as the sugar content of the grass is quite negligible, addition of a small quantity of molasses during the process of filling is essential. It is imperative to cut the fodder in the right stage for silage making. In case of Jawar and other such millets, cutting should be done when the seed is in the milk stage. Grass should be cut when it is just flowering.

Filling

The entire success of the preparation of silage depends upon the process of filling Negligence on the part of workers engaged in the work of filling may bring damage to a large bulk of fodder. As far as possible, fodder freshly cut should be immediately carted to the silo pits for filling, and it should not be allowed to dry in the fields.

Before commencing to fill,

it is necessary to spread a layer of waste grass at the bottom of the pit. This will avoid wastage by contact with earth. While filling care should be taken to eliminate air space in between layers. After each layer of about one foot depth, the packed fodder should be thoroughly pressed down. This can be easily done by trampling, proper care being taken to give adequate pressure on sides and corners. As sufficient moisture is required to facilitate the process of fermentation, it is essential to sprinkle a few buckets of water over a depth of every two feet or so. If the fodder is over-ripe or partly dried, the addition of water should be more frequent, and in larger quantities. Sprinkling a small quantity of salt between depths of every foot of filled up fodder will add to the taste of the silage.

After about half the pit is filled, the pressing should be firmer and more frequent. To facilitate this, a few bullocks may be let into the pit and allowed to walk up and down several times. It should be borne in mind that a little air-space left in the corners or sides will render a large bulk of fodder round about it unfit for feeding, due to formation of mould.

The filling of the pit should be continued until it goes about two feet above the ground level. It should then be allowed to set for two days time. Due to the tremendous heat generated in the process of fermentation, the fodder in the pit gets cooked and sets down. At this stage pressing should be done once again. By this time the top level would have sunk down to about one foot below the ground level. On the third day sufficient water should be sprinkled over the surface to make it thoroughly wet, and filling should be restarted. But this time filling should be done above the ground level in such a way that the top surface will assume a conical shape. The sides should have a slope towards the ground on either side. The height above the ground level in the middle of the pit may be about two feet. The surface should now be covered with a layer of about one foot of earth, after giving a protective covering with some waste grass. The earth so thrown should be beaten hard with a piece of wood, and it should be cow-dung plastered.

The process is now complete. The silage will be ready for feeding after a period of two months time. It can therefore be opened at any time after that period. It should however be noted that once a pit is opened, feeding should be continued daily, as otherwise the top layer will get dry due to exposure.

A well prepared silage will have a deep brown colour and a strong fermented smell. Silage that looks darkish in colour and emits a ransid smell is defective and should not be fed. Due to its tendency to produce gas, a mature animal should not be fed more than about forty pounds per day.

Advantages

Silage is a cheap source of succulent fodder, which can be made available at any time during the hot summer months. It improves digestion, stimulates milk production, and keeps the working bullocks in proper condition. Due to its acidic fermented taste it is relished very much by the cattle. Feeding of silage will ensure an appreciable saving in the expenditure on grain feed. Village level workers throughout India could easily take up this work and demonstrate the success of it to the villagers round about their headquarters. Once the peasants are convinced of its benefits, it will soon become a common practice to prepare silage for summer feeding.

HONEY ON THE MOUNT

P. N. Oak

IN THESE days you would hardly believe if one were to tell you that there is a process by which you can simply sit and earn an honest living. You would hardly pay any heed, for it seems too good to be true. Further if you were told that you can make numerous workers toil day and night to fill your coffers with immunity you would hardly believe it. Again if it were put to you that those who toil for you would bring you liquid gold by invading and trespassing into public and private property and yet no one would raise even a finger you might term it to be fantastic. But all this is true of the bee-keeping industry.

Apiculture, as it is called, hardly needs any training or capital worth the name. It needs very little labour. On Mount Abu, the hill station in Rajasthan, one comes across numerous small bee hives (in boxes) sheltered under a *shanty* or a palm leaf in private compounds and premises of different organisations and institutions. The (boxes) hives belong to several individuals and organisations. On Mount Abu there are about forty individuals who earn a sizeable side income out of apiculture. They include men and women from walks of life as different as accountancy and education. One such is Shri Anant Shankar Tamhne, accountant in the local electric power house. Though very sociable, you would hardly ever come to know of his paying hobby even after being introduced to him unless you visited his house, saw the ovary box kept in his verandah and a cupboard full of bottles of honey of different

shades (of red), flavours and odours.

He is the largest single owner of apiary boxes on Mount Abu. He has twenty boxes kept at different places on the hill station where his friends or colleagues in office can keep a watchful eye. Shri Tamhne started with two boxes and within three years has increased the number to twenty. He was encouraged and initiated in apiculture by the headmaster of the local Government High School. Later as he got interested in it, Shri Tamhne used to go to the nearby Government apiary for an hour every day for four months and obtained a certificate of proficiency in apiculture. His wife too holds a similar certificate. Besides she served for sometime in that apiary and won distinction for her skill and proficiency in apiculture. With the Tamhnes apiculture has become a family trade and hobby. Their eldest son who has just passed the SSC examination has inherited the skill and interest of his parents and now helps them in this cottage industry.

A few initial instructions from an expert are enough to get you started with this home industry. The swarms of bees assiduously working in the different hives hardly need any attention except an occasional "HOW DO YOU DO" sort of call while one passes by to office or for evening walk. The bees on Mount Abu feed themselves mostly on wild blossoms of the forest trees sprouting in the rocky heights. For want of enough blossoms throughout the year generally every hive yields honey only during summer and winter. On an average Shri Tamhne gets 20 lbs. honey every year, per box which is very modest yield. At Mount Abu honey is sold at three rupees a pound. The yield from 20 hives thus amounts to Rs 1,200 a year or Rs 100 per month.

So far he has had no marketing problem for customers call at his house for pure honey. At times they have to return disappointed if his stock is exhausted. He said, he shudders to buy honey from the market ever since he took to apiculture. Sometimes impure or even downright fake honey is marketed by unscrupulous people. Once he purchased honey from a dweller of the forest who swore by its purity. Later when he had gone and the honey was being bottled a lump of jaggary was found at the bottom of the honey pot.

Honey has numerous uses, specially medicinal. It can be applied externally or taken in dozes. It cures or sooths sore or tired eyes. It can be used as an appetizer and as a tonic. For the diabetic, to whom sugar is taboo, honey can fill the void. For those suffering from rheumatism or gout this industry provides a further relief. It is said that two bee-stings on the first day, four on the second day and so on rising up to eight stings and then the same reduced in a similar proportion alleviates rheumatic pain.

Honey can also heal economic sores. This "sweet" industry can relieve the pecuniary problems of many-a-home or add some flavour to lives sore with inadequate incomes. All you have to do is to patronize a swarm of bees and give them a box to work in and they multiply in no time. If you hire out a little shady box-home to the bees they will bring you anything up to 100 lbs. of this nectar which means Rs 300 a year, while the bee hive box costs only about Rs 22 once for all.

Chemical Fertilizers

Jaya Narayan Singh

Chemical fertilizers were being introduced in our block. An intensive drive was launched and we were making wide publicity about its necessity and uses. Farmers were being persuaded to permit the trials on their fields. We were supplying the fertilizers free of cost for this purpose. In this connection, I went to Parmu Purwa along with the Assistant Development Officer (Agriculture). With some difficulty we could persuade a few progressive farmers of the village to give a trial to the fertilizers. Suitable fields were selected and the details were discussed. The A.D.O. (Agri.) assured the farmers that these trials would be personally supervised by him and no pain would be spared to make them a grand success. Everything was settled and we returned to our headquarter after giving final instructions to the village level worker.

(Continued on page 10)

THE STORY OF MY LIFE

I THOUGHT I should talk about myself. I am a very very old being known even in the days of King Solomon. Scientists have named me "Punica Granatum". They believe my original home is the Middle East. My value as a medicinal plant has been well known. My fruits are delicious and the syrup I offer is refreshing. Some of my forms are decorative and serve as ornamental hedges. Why talk more about me. Let me repeat what a great prophet said of me. "Eat the pomegranate for it purges the system of envy and hatred".

I am very cosmopolitan in soil and climate requirements. I thrive best in semi-arid regions where high temperatures accompany the ripening season. I prefer loamy soils. I tolerate alkalinity to an extent. I commence yielding in two years giving peak yields during the months of May-June. About fifty fruits per plant is a normal yield. The fruits have a keeping quality and stand transport. There are several varieties amongst us. But nomenclature and classification amongst our tribe has yet to be taken up. Some of us give sour fruit and some others sweet. In South India, Paper Shell, Spanish Ruby, Musket Red, Kabul, and Vellodu are some of the varieties described. I relish a spacing of 18 feet.

Scant respect has so far been shown to my culture. Data regarding irrigational and manurial requirements are lacking. Hence no wonder my returns are poor.

I know my drawbacks. My fruits often split before ripening. In many areas, my fruits are bagged. Fruit Lover (Virachola isocrates) is a notorious pest which can be controlled by spraying 0.03 per cent endrin. Squirrels also often do damage.

I am a dutiful friend, dear gram sevak. You take my cuttings and spread me to different villages. In a kitchen garden, insist I am a must plant. In return, I promise to respond your call with delicious fruits in two years. Thank you.

P. Balasubrahmanyam
Extension Officer (Agriculture), Kurnool

TRAINING SADHUS FOR SOCIAL WORK

According to the Secretary of the Bharat Sadhu Samaj, preparations are being made to establish a training centre at Rishikesh in October to prepare volunteers from the Sadhus for checking corruption and adulteration of edibles, propagating bhoodan, shramdan and organisation of rural crafts. Fifty sadhus would be admitted to begin with.

The Samaj intends to undertake management of temple properties and the registration of sadhus. The samaj was established two years ago to mobilise sadhus to instil national consciousness and co-operation in fulfilling the National Plan and discovering avenues for voluntary service.

HAMARA DESH

WOMEN POLICE FORCE

The U.P. Government had to give up its experiment of a women police force on account of frequent quarrels among its members. Explaining the reason for this decision, the Home Minister of U.P. said, "The police can stop men from cutting one another's throat but even the God can do nothing except to watch helplessly when Eve is in fury."

THRIFT

Government of India has started a scheme to encourage the habit of thrift among the people in the villages and make use of all available resources for the success of the second Five Year Plan. This will be done through the saving bank facilities which are being extended for the first time on temporary post offices in the rural areas. Under the present rules, saving bank powers are not given to a post office which is not permanent and since many of the post offices in the rural areas are only temporary, it had not been possible to give these powers to them. The Government of India has now decided to relax the present rules so that the temporary post offices in the villages could be given powers of dealing with the saving fund account.

ONE-WAY FOOT-PRINTS

A young tusker which killed one man and injured two others including its *mahout* at Ramanathapuram met with a watery grave in the sea near Rameswaram. The Revenue Divisional Officer, the Tahsildar, the Police Inspector and others who went from Ramnad in search of the elephant in Rameswaram island, have returned and all are of the opinion that the animal must have run into the sea in its frenzy, got caught in the quick-sands and finally carried away by an undercurrent. The search party has come to this conclusion after closely following the footprints of the elephant up to the sea. There was no trace of footprints in the reverse direction.

SMALL SAVINGS DRIVE

Tempting offers of promotion to Panchayat Secretaries and of commendation certificates and shields for panchayats have been held out by the Punjab State Government as part of the intensive drive launched in this district to step up collections for Small Savings and National Plan certificates.

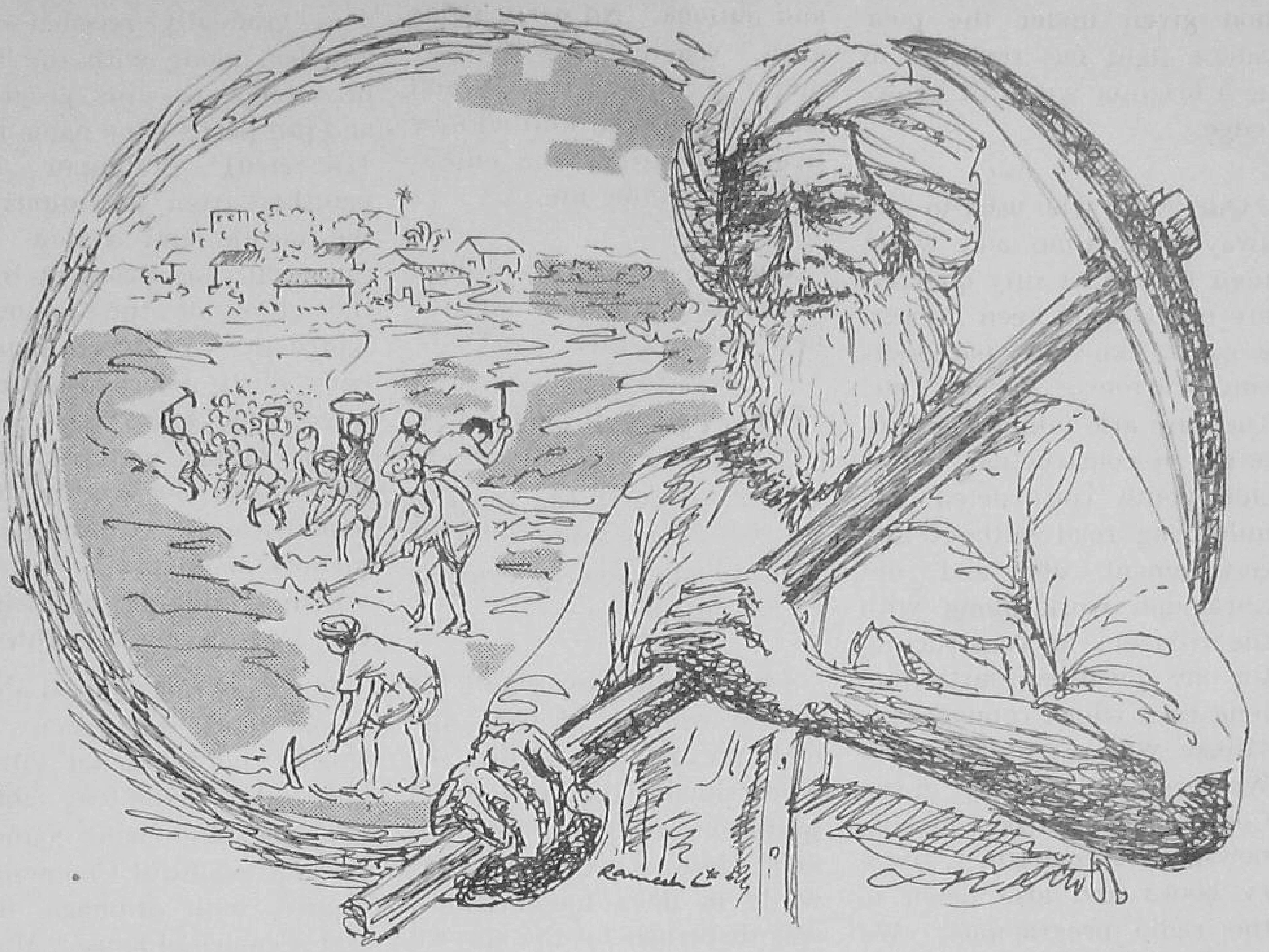
At two recent marriages in a village in the Mehrauli block, bride's parents gave away national savings certificates to the bride instead of cash or jewellery. The amount that we invest in the national savings certificates helps to provide funds to implement the national development works which go to make the whole country more prosperous.

Chemical Fertilizers

(*Continued from page 8*)

Next day the village level worker came and told us that those farmers who had agreed to give a trial to the fertilizers yesterday have now refused to allow it. We went back to Parmu Purwa with a view to find out the reasons of this change of mind over night. And believe me, the simple reason they forwarded was that they apprehended that a practical joke was being played on them when they had been asked to apply a little less than half a bag of the chemical fertilizer on the same plot where they apply ten to fifteen cart-loads of the compost manure without such spectacular success as they had been assured of.

May I add that the shape of things has changed now? As a result of the successful trials of the chemical fertilizers, the average yield has now increased manifold and the demand for the fertilizers too.



WHAT OUR VILLAGE LEADERS SAY

We give below impressions of two village leaders as conveyed to Miss N. V. Jaya, Social Education Organiser (Women), Community Development Block, Gulbarga and Shri Moni-uddin Khan, Social Education Organiser, NES Sindgi, Bijapur.

On 15th August, 1947, India became free from foreign bondage and became a free Nation. Every citizen of India was rejoicing, all the cities were illuminated, but alas, there was no sign of excitement or happiness in my small village Srinivas Saradgi! We were unable to understand the meaning and value of freedom that India had secured after incessent struggle and sacrifice. We had the same old Jagirdar, the same uneducated, underfed and underclothed poor people, leading a lonely life. The opening of the Community Block in Gulbarga opened up a new way of life for us; close contacts between the officials and non-officials helped to bring about a metamorphosis in remodelling our village.

As far as the education for children was concerned we agreed with the officials and a building was acquired for the same; our children are getting not only the knowledge of reading and writing but also basic education to safeguard their future. We laughed at the idea of education for the grown-up people, who have a very little part to play in the rest of their life. Now we have realized its importance, since we are not under any obligation to the Patwari or Patel. The educa-

tion given under the poor candle light has revealed to us a brighter world of knowledge.

Our youth who used to idle away their time and waste their energy in silly quarrels are now taking keen interest in games like volley ball, foot-ball, carroms, *kabadi,* etc. They are also taking keen interest in construction works. Our youth constructed one mile long road without any Government aid and did Shramdan work along with the villagers in constructing the one and three-fourth mile long road which connects the village with the main road. We spend our evenings in the Community centres reading newspapers, magazines, library books and also listen to the radio programmes. We conduct Bhajans thrice a week. Our women folk do not waste their time chattering about their household affairs; they have learnt some useful crafts like sewing, embroidery, knitting, cookery, etc.

We have all facilities now. Ours is a neat and clean village with houses for the poor, a Maternity centre, a Community centre, a protected well, neat lanes, etc. One finds not only broader, clean and better roads and lanes but also people with a broader vision and outlook. No party feuds exist. Where there was formerly a dull, sceptical and sluggish outlook, we find now liveliness, energy and enthusiasm for better life.

I invite you to my village to feel the new spirit and the new pulse of life.

JOINT EFFORTS

Now, listen to the story of another village leader who extends to you a hearty welcome to his village.

I had devoted my whole life to the worship of God, and had no relation with the world outside the Mutt. I was quite contented with my Mutt and Mantras. One evening while in deep meditation, I was disturbed by the shrewd cries of the villagers, who rushed to the Temple for safety. I came out of the Temple and was surprised to see a police van in my village. I found out that they had not come to frighten us but to help us in the reconstruction of our village. I thought it necessary to come out of the Mutt to serve the humanity. I joined hands with the Police and the Project officials. In no time others also came forward to lend a hand in developing our village. Fear and distress towards the officialdom gradually receded—we marched along with the Police troops towards progress and prosperity—the name Hal (Deserted) Sultanpur has vanished from the minds of the people and a new Taj Sultanpur, has sprung up from the ruins of the Bahmani Kingdom. A few months back dusty poor cart track, huge pits and ruds, irregular fallen muddy walls, huge stones blocking the dirty lanes, heaps of cow-dung and manure, stagnant water everywhere, a dilapidated School hut, was a common sight.

But from this general air of gloom and depression has sprung up a model village with a two mile-long motorable road, wide lanes connecting the beautiful Community Centre, with drainage, neat and regularised houses, Model Protected with cement platform, a Community Cattle shed with compost pits, thrashing floor, well ventilated attractive school building, neat houses for the poor and a *bal mandir* for the children to spend their evening; above all, most amazing is the revolution brought about in the spirit and bearing of the people.

Come and see the shaping of a country's dream—a small part of this new India gradually taking shape in my village?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Points of View

WOODEN

Sir,

THERE SEEMS to be something wrong somewhere in the proper functioning of our coordination work. As a Gram Sevak, I had great difficulty in convincing the people of my villages of the use of Ammonium Sulphate as a fertilizer. After many many months of hard persuasion, demonstration and what not, it became popular. One of the progressive ryots of my area wanted a bag or two of it. It was a 20 miles journey with his cart on a rainy day. He was sure to get it from the town. When the poor ryot reached the office, the official was talking to some friend. After the visitor left, he tried to approach him but he was not allowed to get in. One after the other, well-dressed *Sahebs* walked in and walked out but our ryot could not get anything and was frustrated. And what do you think was the result? The good-will and co-operation built by years of sincere work vanished.

Such instances of indifference on the part of many of our Extension workers can be multiplied. In one of my villages, the people who had in the beginning resisted all my attempts to persuade them to get their cattle inoculated against epidemic which had broken out, changed their mind later on and asked me to arrange it. When I approached the Veterinary Centre, the Doctor there demanded a rupee for every head of cattle inoculated. The local quack Veterinary got a good opportunity to increase his practice.

A Gram Sevak.

SEMINARS FOR GRAM SEVAKS

Sir,

RECENTLY THERE was a discussion on the desirability of holding separate seminars for the Gram Sevaks. I feel it is not only desirable but also necessary. These seminars and conferences of the Gram Sevaks would not only help them in knowing each other better but they can exchange their experiences and learn a great deal from each other. If it is not possible to hold these seminars on an All-India basis, I would suggest that these should be held at the State level, at least.

Yours etc.,
B. N. Singha.

Lakhipur, N.E.S. Block
13-6-57

THE HAND-OPERATED PERSIAN WHEEL

Sir,

TRIPTI IS an altogether new and recent device for water lifting for drinking purposes by hand. It can be operated by a child of 12 years of age. The cost of this wheel is Rs. 175 net. It can work on a well of 25 to 30 ft. depth. Its output is about 240 gallons per hour. Villagers of this area resented the conversion of step wells into draw wells but by this device they have appreciated the idea and are installing such 'Tripties' on their converted and remodelled drinking water wells.

Yours etc.,
C. L. B.

Jaipur,
5-8-1957

DISPARITY IN PAY

Sir,

I READ with interest the letter of Shri Krishna Murari Lal Shrivastava from Rajasthan about the pay scales of Social Education Organisers as published in the April issue of *Gram Sevak*. When compared to us in Assam, my co-worker in Rajasthan seems to be extremely fortunate. An S.E.O. in Assam starts with a salary of Rs. 80 and the maximum that he can hope to reach is Rs. 200. Indeed many of us feel a sense of injustice when we see people having different pay scales in different States for the same work. There is a strong case for removing this discrimination of pay scales of the officers of the same designation on ground of States only.

Yours etc.,
Suyya Kanta Bhuya
Social Education Organiser,
Sonari N.E.S. Block (Assam)
23-7-57

PROMOTIONS

Sir,

THE MINIMUM qualification laid down for the posts of S.E.O.S. by the Madhya Pradesh Govt. is a Bachelor's de-

gree. Generally most of us (Gram Sevaks) are Matriculates, some are Intermediates and very few are Graduates. If the Government insists on this qualification, the chances of being promoted to the post of an S.E.O. for us are almost nil. I feel the Government must lay down a ratio between the promotions and direct recruitment. There are about 2,000 Gram Sevaks in Madhya Pradesh and if they have nothing to look forward to, their enthusiasm for the work might naturally slacken in course of time. May I appeal to the authorities concerned to do something in the matter.

Yours etc.,
R. S. Pande.

NES Block Udaipura,
(Bhopal)
31-7-57

GRAM SEVAK IN BENGALI

Sir,

A COPY of your esteemed Journal Gram Sevak is received in our office and all of us enjoy reading it. The Journal is very useful not only to the Gram Sevaks but also to the villagers. The only difficulty is that it is in English and many of our villagers cannot understand this language. They are thus deprived of the benefit which they could have otherwise got out of it. I would, therefore, suggest that it should be brought out in Bengali as well. I hope this suggestion will be sympathetically considered.

Yours etc.,
Ramesh Chandra
Akhandu, V.L.W.
Dharmanagar (Tripura),
9-8-57

BACKWARD

Sir,

In the monsoon season, one evening, after finishing the volley ball game with my club friends, I was coming home. A stranger greeted me and said that he wanted to be my guest. I said that I would be happy. After some talk with him, I came to know that he was a B.Com. student and had come to our Block as an Apprentice in the summer vacation. I brought him to my house. He wanted some information which I gave and offered him a cup of tea along with other friends. After this I was engaged tn preparing the meals for both of us. (I do the cooking myself because I am still unmarried). Meanwhile, my guest was sitting in the verandah reading some books. The appearance of this gentleman attracted many village people who passed that way and before I could realise it, I found all the prominent members of the village crowded in the house and my landlord leading them. I came out and saw that the landlord was shouting angrily at me. He asked me either to leave the house or ask my guest to leave it immediately. I calmed him down and enquired as to what the matter was. The landlord said that my guest belonged to a 'backward' class and he had no business to get such 'backward' people to the house. Luckily my friend understood the situation and offered to leave the house immediately. I felt sorry that being an Extension worker, I had not done my duty properly.

Yours etc.,
R. Kulkarni.

Gram Sevak,
C.D. Block, Kannad,
Aurangabad.
14.7.57

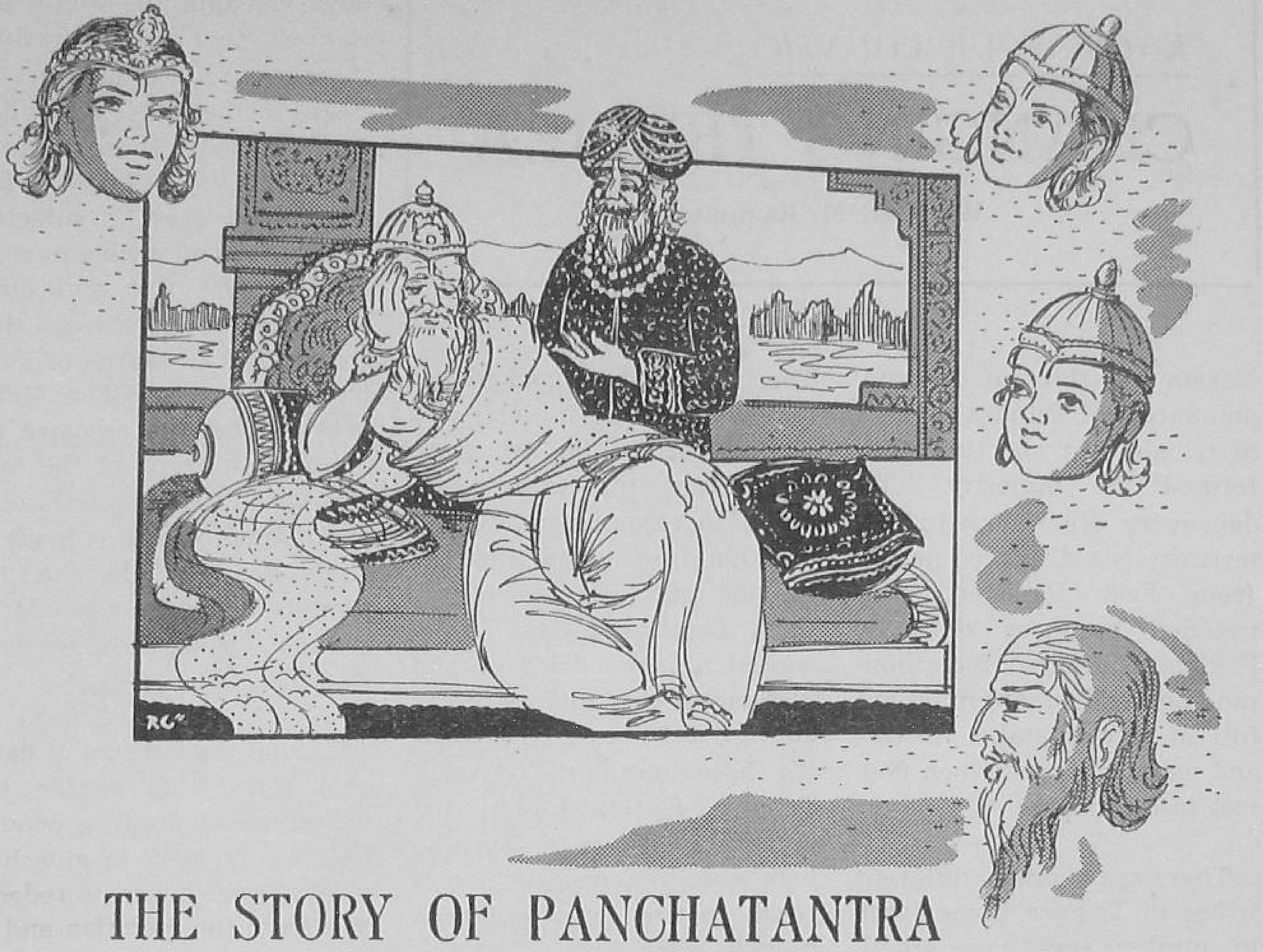
CULTIVATION BY PIT METHOD

Sir,

Some progressive cultivators in my Block have experienced that the cotton if sown 5 to 8 feet apart between two rows and $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet to 3 feet apart between two plants in a row gives better yield. Higher performance is required when cotton is dobbled in pits of 1 ft. x 1 ft. x 1 ft. It should be mixed with 2 lbs. of compost or farm yard manure, 40 lbs. of nitrogen and 20 lbs. of phospharic acid may be given per acre as top dressing in the form of ammonium sulphate and super phosphate. Two or three irrigations in October, November and December may be given as and when required. It has been found that the yield has gone up by about 40 per cent by this method.

Yours etc.
N. M. Patel

N.E.S. Block,
Dhandhuka.
20-8-57



THE STORY OF PANCHATANTRA

MANY MANY years ago, in a city in the South, there lived a King. He was a great scholar. He had mastered all the fine arts and learning; but he was not happy. He had three sons. All the three, alas, were blockheads. The King tried his best to educate them but they were hostile to education.

When all his attempts failed, he called his Counsellors and said, "Gentlemen, you know these sons of mine are hostile to education. When I see them I become very sad. For there is wisdom in the old proverb which says: 'Of sons unborn or dead or fools; unborn or dead will do: they cause a little grief, no doubt; but fools a long life through'. I, therefore, want you to suggest something which could get me out of this difficulty." One of the Counsellors told the King, "O King, there is a Brahmin named Vishnu Sharma. He is very well known for his mastery over many sciences. Let him instruct the princes. He will certainly make them intelligent within no time."

And so the King summoned Vishnu Sharma and said, "Holy Sir, as a favour to me, you must make these princes masters of the art of practical life. In return, I will give you a 100 land-grants." Vishnu Sharma took the boys, went home and made them learn by heart five books which he composed and called: (1) Loss of friends; (2) Winning of friends; (3) Crows and owls; (4) Loss of grains; and (5) Ill-considered action. The princes learnt these and in six months' time, they had mastered the art of intelligent living. These five books compiled together came to be known as 'Panchatantra'.

Now you know how the stories of Panchatantra originated. In our next Issue, we will give you a story from the first chapter on the 'Loss of friends'. (J.N.B.)

KNOW YOUR COUNTRY

CHANGING TRIPURA

Wg. Cdr. M. Ramunny

NEARLY ONE-third of the total population of Tripura consists of tribals. At one time they formed the majority. To-day every other man in this territory is a displaced person from East Pakistan. Surrounded on three sides by Pakistan, Tripura's four thousand and odd square miles are full of thick bamboo forests and narrow rivers which flow fast into Pakistan.

There are eighteen different tribes in Tripura, some large in number, some very small. They have their distinct dialects, customs and traditions, but since many years the ruling family had brought about a certain unity among them.

To-day they have reached varying stages of development. There are the most advanced who live in and around Agartala. The men and women dress like Bengalees. There are big landlords; there are also poorer ones who cultivate their lands and live like their neighbours of East Bengal.

But large numbers,—about twenty thousand families—still are shifting cultivators. In the days of the Maharaja, land was plenty and people few. The tribal had no land to call his own, but all the land was his own. As the sun grew warm and the rains were about to come, men, women and children went into the jungles and cut down the thick bamboo forests. They waited till they dried up and just before the monsoon was on, they set fire to them. During those months the whole of Tripura resounds with the crackling noise of the burning bamboos; tongues of flames reach to the skies and then quickly come down. The animals and birds flee from fire and destruction. They are chased and shot by the arrows of the waiting tribesman. The fires die down, the embers are still hot but there is cool breeze from the south and needs, no meteorological re- then comes rain. A tribal port and he is never too late or too early with his "*Jhum*". As the first showers spend their fury, and the ashes are absorbed into the virgin soil, the entire family comes out again with small baskets on one side and "*Tuckle*" in the other hand. They dibble and put three or four seeds in one hole. Rice, oilseeds, vegetables, cotton and even jute come out together. As the crops come up they work for days weeding the *Jhum* and in about two or three months there is rich crops on the slopes of the hills. After harvest they leave these ones and go to new virgin forests. But what they grow is sufficient hardly for about nine months. To purchase rice and other essential commodities they move about in search of loans from *Mahajans*. The *Mahajans* purchase in advance the *Jhum* cash crops of the next season. Advance purchase of one maund of jute is made at about Rs. 10, while when the produce is ready it is sold on the spot for anything between Rs. 20 to 25.

To stop the burning of valuable forests, to enable the tribesman to produce enough food for himself, to give him a permanent house, to redeem him from the *Mahajan* and to make the necessities of life easily available to him and to help him to find a market for his gods have been the object of Tribal Welfare in Tripura.

Tripura's plan is to settle as many tribals as possible in colonies. The first one of those colonies has already come up in a place called Bisramganj about twenty-five miles from Agartala. Years ago one of the Maharajas had rested in this place on his long tour throughout the State and hence the name. To-day hundreds of tribal families are resting in this place on their long journey to peace and prosperity.

In January, 1957 the place

was full of jungles. Tigers and panthers roamed about and one could see them even on the main road as one drove along in the night. The clearing of the jungles was started on 22nd January, 1957. About 154 families were chosen to settle in this hillock and intervening valleys where paddy can be grown . The Government contributed Rs. 750 for each house of a tribal family while the families' share in kind or labour was Rs. 250 per house. The plans of the houses were given by the tribals themselves. The Officers first brought a plan of the normal tribal house which are built on platforms on the top of a hill. But these were rejected. For the last three generations they had lived in normal houses. According to their wishes their new houses were built with *pucca* plinth and C. I. sheet roofing. Permanency was what they wanted as they were tired of rebuilding their houses every season. Half an acre of land was allotted to each house. The houses were built facing the road. These roads they had themselves constructed. Tribal families are allowed to take their timber for their houses from the forests. All of them went into the jungles and brought the timber for their houses. It was not an individual family affair. But the whole colony went and collected for all the houses. They were building a colony not a house for each.

The women have fenced off the half an acre of land around each house. Fruit trees have been planted and vegetables have started growing and one can even see jute in some of these plots. The model Farm of six acres in the middle of the colony distributed plants and seedlings of all varieties. Cotton plants in each compound are supposed to produce enough cotton that would be necessary for producing clothes for each household. The model Farm also engaged the tribals as labourers. They learn improved methods of cultivation while they earn.

TRAINING CENTRE

On top of the highest hillock is built the Cottage Industry Training Centre. Spinning, weaving and tailoring are taught here. Umbrella handle making is also a trade which youngmen find very profitable to learn. Looms are waiting in the big hall of the training Institute and are booked in turn by each family. A few young men and girls are taught tailoring and they can produce all the clothes that are needed in the colony.

The Mahila Samity that has been formed has got an Instructor to teach embroidery and other fancy work. By nature these girls are adept with their hands. Children have formed themselves into a youth club and spend their spare time in useful work in the model farm or looking after the vegetable garden or playing around the weavers and spinners learning as they play.

BASIC SCHOOL

The Basic school attracts children from outside the colony also. They have a small boarding house and a good playing ground. A recreation centre has come up on one side where tribal music and dancing and all the new things the children have learnt are produced for the local audience.

There is fuel reserve for the women to fetch fuel as they need it. The cattle have their own grazing ground. They are looked after by a Veterinary Assistant who lives in the colony and has a dispensary attached to his house. He moves to neighbouring villages also and treats the cattle.

Forty such colonies are to be completed by the end of the Plan period. Today, hundreds come to see the new colonies coming up. They all want similar colonies. They are in a hurry to march forward to a fuller and a happier life.

"Don't complain about the snow on your neighbour's roof when your own door-step is unclean".—Confucius

HER ONLY SON

TWO YEARS have passed. One day an old lady came to me at Bakundri. She wanted to send a post card to her only son at the Central Prison, Kolhapur. He was convicted for the murder committed by a group of four during the village feud and was nearing the completion of his term of five years imprisonment.

After an enquiry as usual—a habit that we Gram Sevaks have developed—I learnt from her the pathetic story and the hardships the old lady was undergoing.

A widow, struggling for her son's prosperity, brought him up well. He was a fine strong youth. She had a small piece of land and a house in the village. Besides, she was running a small grocery (Kirana) shop. She got him married and had a grand child. It was a happy family of four people.

Seven years ago, the village party frictions ruined her home. Her son was involved in a murder, convicted and imprisoned. Her little earning was spent and the small piece of land was sold during the trial to save him. Her young daughter-in-law with the child went to her parents in a distant village for living. This old lady rendered domestic services in another house in the village and thus made her living.

Tears from her eyes flowed all the while she narrated her pathetic story. She came to me many times afterwards for sending the letters and getting her son's letters read by me. Moreover, she could often find me in the village Co-operative Society which was adjacent to her house.

Four months afterwards, her son, Appanna Chigari, returned home from the prison. He had nothing to do and found it difficult to make a living. He came to me one day and asked for my help. He wanted to get some loan from the Co-operative Society. He wanted to buy a sewing machine for he knew tailoring well.

I could not do anything first. I could neither help him by 'taccavi' loans nor ask the society to advance loans for he was landless and what was more a convicted person. I wished to help him as far as I could and I was determined to do so.

A friend of mine is a manager of 'Usha' Sewing machines at Belgaum. I contacted him and requested him to supply one new machine to Shri Appanna Chigari on instalment basis. He agreed if I were to stand as one of the two surities. I agreed to do so and requested another of my friends to stand as the second surety. We collected some money and paid it as an advance for the machine.

Shri Appanna Chigari brought the machine to his village and started a tailoring shop. He does the tailoring for the neighbouring villages besides the ones from his village. If there is more work in another village he goes there with his sewing machine and completes the tailoring work. He never misses opportunities such as village fairs and other ceremonial occasions when there is heavy tailoring work. He works day and night on those days. Now, he has repaid the debts and almost completed monthly instalments of the machine.

No doubt, in all the villages while I was working at Badkundri Centre, school buildings, drinking water wells, godowns, village approach roads are built by the villager's co-operation. Youth Clubs, Bhajan Mandals and Farmers Union are organized. Gopuri latrines and *pucca* village gutters are costructed. My village Badkundri was one of the few model villages in the Hukeri-Gokak Community Development Project. I carried out many fertiliser demonstrations, got taccavi loans sanctioned for 12 Oil engines for pumping water and 7 new irrigation wells to the tune of Rs. 75,000. Yet when I look back upon my past four year services, I do not claim to have done anything for which I should feel proud but this small assistance rendered by me has left a lasting impression on my mind and I always recollect this with pride.

A. S. Kumar, Gram Sevak
N.E.S. Gokak (Mysore).

STUMBLING BLOCKS

THE JEEP took us to a small village near Mirjapur. We were to stay there for ten days and try to practice what we had learnt. Whenever the thought of convincing people and rousing their enthusiasm to hear to us came to me, I was feeling nervous and diffident. Nevertheless, my first immemorable experience gave me the confidence which I lacked.

The village was small, its inmates poor and atmosphere quite discouraging. We were unwanted guests and our arrival at the place created some sort of commotion in the minds of the people. They had all some thing to speak of us. Standing at distances in small groups, they acted as passive observers. When we tried to approach them and converse with them, they gently retreated. On the first evening we could collect some urchins and make them play some group games. The joyous play of the lads brought the men folk closer to us as they felt happy to see their boys play and move with us freely. This was not enough for, as we passed through the streets of the village, we could only see doors shut. Anxious looks peeping from behind the walls of backyards puzzled us a little. "How to speak to those who never liked to stand before us" was the question. A few even if they were outside used to give very curt replies and in no time slip away. On the morning of the second day our Shramdan campaign won the sympathies of the local people and they came about, in the beginning, to speak and later to work with us. Talk with those assembled, disclosed their aversion to the schemes of development. They were desperate and disheartened. Their problems were age-old. They had reconciled to the fate and had developed a strong notion, that no power on earth could improve their lot. Religion was their only hope and they viewed anything and everything from the religious point of view. All the civilisation and scientific development had not affected them and had proved ineffective in rooting out superstitious beliefs and tabooes among them. I learnt that a section of the community, all labourers, were assembling in a particular house to conduct *Bhajan*. We wanted to go there but the members were reluctant to admit us there. My talk on music and on *Bhajan* ballads gained entrance for me. The first night I was a spectator with all appreciation for their way of doing the things. The novelty disappeared and they felt my presence in no way a nuisance.

The second night at intervals I wanted to say a few words. They were not prepared to hear me and their only request was that I should sing. I must say, my song impressed them. They asked for more. I then said that their way of conducting the *Bhajan* was good; yet it could be improved and that musical instrument would give more pleasure and entertainment. The Government was prepared to meet half the cost and supply the instruments.

They only appreciated my views but expressed their inability to pay the half cost. They had to collect Rs. 50 and this seemed impracticable and unthinkable in the case of poor people who were finding

N. VEDHADRAIAH
S. E. O
Porumamilla,
N. E. S. Block
Andhra Pradesh

it difficult to make both ends meet. There was an old man figuring on the scene who never liked the idea. The two things which he disliked most were novelty and change. His word was law in the families. Quite unlike him was a young fellow with no voice in the village matters.

One day after the *Bhajan* I invited him to my lodging. He kept up the engagement. Talk on religion and philosophy interested him and made him feel easy to sit and talk freely. I impressed upon him how things were bound to change and how cynical views should give room to new hopes and aspirations. Time demanded

change. It was no act of sin to live a happy and pleasant life. To prove that musical instruments would add beauty I sang with and without instruments. With a twinkle in his eyes the old man remarked that I was correct in my opinion. He was convinced and said "We old people are really at times stumbling blocks to progress. Our ideas are as old as we are. The fort of folly in us is too strong to break down. In such a case it is good to keep aloof and thus help progress." I then pleaded that the old should change their outlook and become young in enthusiasm to lead the youngsters in welcoming the new order.

The old man, now a good follower of mine, invited me to his house. From his small store he willingly parted with some amount for purchasing instruments. Others followed suit. I felt surprised when the house-wives came out with contributions of a few annas each, the small savings from their hard earnings. Thanks to the lead given by the old man, the young leader of whom I have referred, went round from house to house and collected the required amount with greater zeal. Thus the village once with no activity and no life began to think in terms of improving its lot. The villagers later promised to have a co-operative society and some games equipment.

Meanwhile the day for us to return came. I was too sad to leave the people and much more so were they. The pious old man was a regular visitor to Pandaripur. He had the ashes *Prasadam* brought in the previous year. He brought those things, pleaded that he was too poor to give any big present in memory of my association with him. He said "I am giving you the *"Puza dravyams"* of Panduranga and thereby His blessings. This rich treasure will give you all happiness and success in life.' I thanked the old man and the whole village gave us a happy send-off.

PEN FRIENDS LEAUGE

The following is the list of new members of our Pen Friends' League :—

126. Shri Mohd. Kaseem,—V.L.W. J. Kalgudi, Tungabhadra Community Project, Raichur Distt.)—Interested in Medicines, Agriculture, Music and Songs, and Rural Development —Mother tongue : Urdu.

127. Shri K. V. Karunakaran,—Gram Sevak, Kidanvoor, Kottayam Distt., Kerala State—S.S.L.C.—Interested in Social Education and Agriculture. Bee-keeping, organising youth and farmers clubs, songs and sports—Mother tongue : Malayalam.

128. Shri Ram Dularay Yadava, Gram Sevak Trainee, Training-cum-Extension Project, Rudnapur, Distt. Nainital (U.P.)—Matric—Interested in Social Education, Agriculture, Public Health and uplift of Backward class community—Mother tongue : Hindi.

129. Shri Nathalal H. Odedra, Gram Sevak, C.O. Block Chotila, Distt. Zalawad, Bombay State—Non-Matric—Interested in Agriculture, Social Education, reading, sports, youth clubs, song and arts—Mother tongue : Gujarati.

130. Shri B. Faizulla, V.L.W., P.O. Sangam, via Nizamabad, intensive Block, Yedpally.—H.S.C.— Interested in formation of co-operative and grain banks, social education, group discussions and reading of newspapers—Mother tongue : Urdu.

131. Shri P. T. Kaveriappa —Gram Sevak, Kadavya Centre, Kadavya Post, Coorg District — S.S.L.C.—Intesested in Rural problems and economic survey—Mother tongue : Kanada.

132. Shri V. P. Srivastava—V.L.W. (Trainee), T.E.P. Dohright, Distt. Azamgarh—M.A.—Interested in Rural Problem, Cultural Activities and Social Education — Mother tongue : Hindi.

133. Shri Lingaraj Bachlapur, Gram Sevak, Firozabad Circle, C.D. Block Gulbarga, Distt. Gulbarga, Mysore State—Matriculate—Interested in field work, day-to-day village problems, sports, cottage industries, rural development, cultural programmes, social education—Mother tongue : Kanada.

134. Sri Shastikant S. Gadkari, V.L.S., N.E.S. Block Mehidpur, Distt. Ujjain (M.P.)—Matric—Interested in Scouting, gardening, indoor and outdoor games and cultural programmes—Mother tongue : Marathi.

135. Shri Dalbahadur Chhetri, Gram Sevak, Rangli—Rangli of C.D. Block, P.O. Takdah, Distt. Darjeeling—Intermediate —Interested in social education and social works—Mother tongue : Nepali.

WE RULE THE HOME AND THE VILLAGE

That women can rule not only the house-hold but also the villages much better than men is revealed by an all-women Panchayat of Mahendranagar, District Rajkot. The people of this village, at a general meeting in July unanimously elected an all-women Panchayat to run the administration of the village and also invested the Panchayat with powers to exploit the resources of the village to the maximum for the development of the community.

Sarpanch Hariben is proud of her tiny village and her ambition is to make it a completely self-sufficient unit and a model to be copied. She does not want her village to seek the help of the police either for protection of the village or for any other reason. She also does not want anyone from her jurisdiction to take to court village disputes which she believes ought to be settled through negotiation and reconciliation. The Panchayat will help, she said.

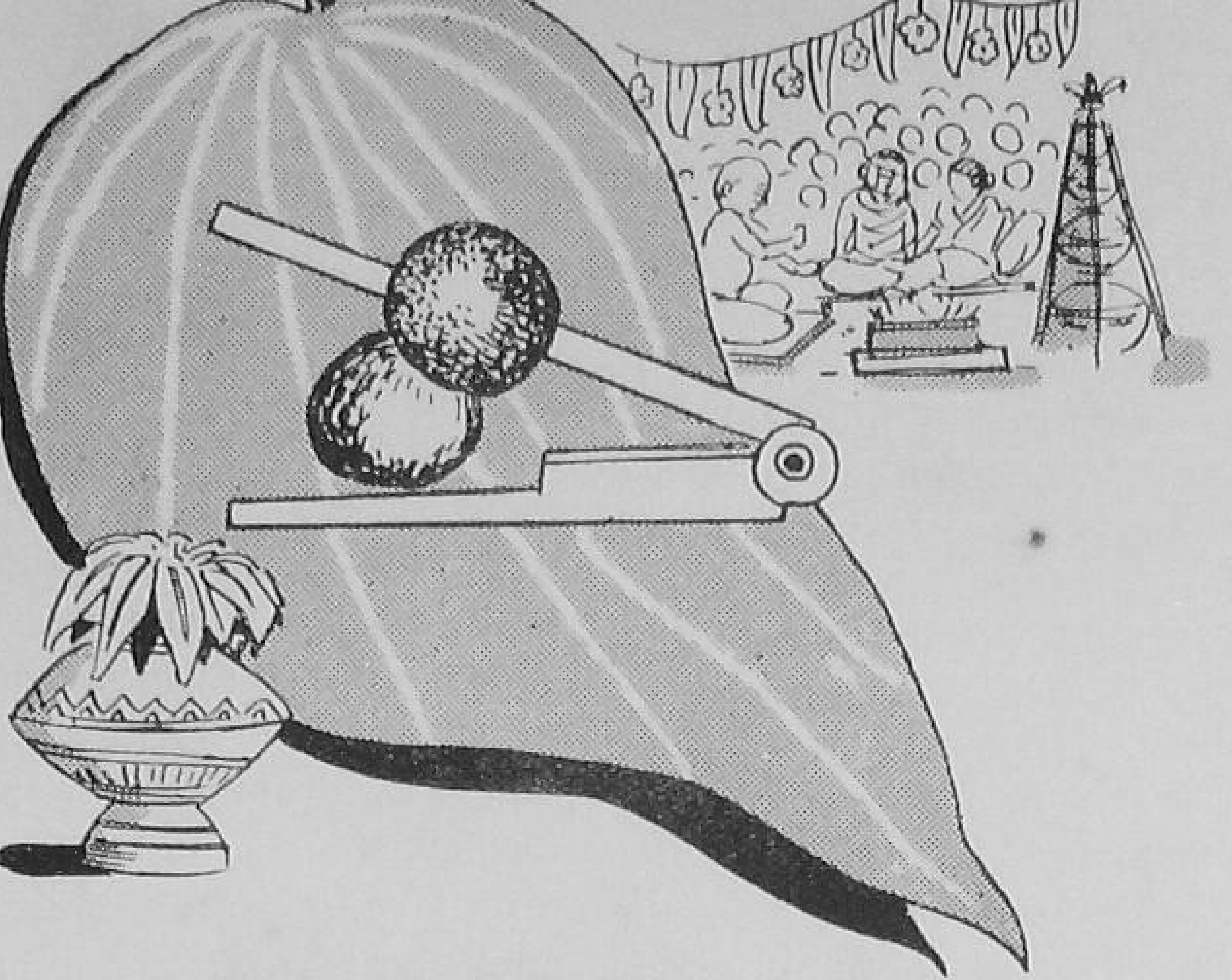
In a review of the progress made in Mahendranagar, the Sarpanch (she is affectionately called Harima) said that since the inception of Panchayat rule in her village in July, 1951, the following works were completed:

One dozen electric lights have been provided on village roads. An electrically-operated drinking water-tank has been installed. Five irrigation wells have been provided with electric motors. Extensive contour-bunding work is in progress to prevent soil erosion. A radio is provided in the Panchayat office. A sum of Rs. 300 has been spent towards establishing a library. An adult education class is being conducted. A youth mandal has been started. A village Home Guard wing has been established. It has donated 54 bighas of land for bhoodan and efforts are being made to raise the status of the Panchayat from Class 'C' to Class 'B'.

While this can be considered good progress for a backward village, she says her Panchayat during her regime will undertake the following

(*Continued on page* 24)

If wishes were hurses



THAMBULAM

N. S. Reddy

BETEL LEAVES and areca nuts, together, are called *thambulam*. Besides stimulating the alimentary system and becoming an object of an indulgent habit, *thambulam* plays a very significant part in the social and ceremonial life.

It is a thing which none hesitates to give or take. Neither does the giver feel its cost nor does the recipient feel an embarrassing sense of gratitude. A man can freely ask one for *thambulam*, and, in his turn, offer it to friends and even strangers. The offeree is at once pleased for receiving what he so much relishes and, at the same time, the offerer is happy for being in a position to please his fellow being. Thus an unobstrusive and unostentatious reciprocity of good-will takes place through the exchange of *thambulam*. When two estranged persons want to patch up, one may, while offering *thambulam* to some other persons, extend it casually to the one with whom he is at loggerheads. If the latter accepts it, a rapproachment is automatically effected.

Thambulam is a precious item which the lower castes make bold to offer to a member of any other caste, whether the latter actually makes use of it or not. A visitor for whom they want to show some respect is offered *thambulam*. Anything else is not given by these castes unless they make sure that the offeree will accept it. Even when a Mala or a Madiga goes to a Brahmin to seek information about auspicious dates, he offers a specific fee enclosed in *thambulam*. Also when a doctor or a medicine-man has to be paid, his fee is kept within *thambulam* and respectfully offered. If on special occasions homage has to be paid to caste *gurus* and prominent personages of the higher castes, even though they are not present at the function, a *thambulam* is raised at the mention of the name of each such dignitary and kept apart for the nonce. A betel leaf is also considered an effective insulator against the pollution of physical touch. Here and there, a quack doctor belonging to an untouchable caste, out of consideration for his orthodox patient of a higher caste, puts a thin silk cloth or a betel leaf round the wrist of the latter to avoid dermal contact while feeling the pulse.

The betrothal is finalised only when the *thambulam* brought by the bridegroom's party is distributed by the headman of the bride's village to all the residents of the village, besides the visitors present at the function. This is given a self-explanatory designation, *sakshi* (witness) *thambulam*. Again, on the previous day of wedding, specific amount of *thambulam* is brought by the groom's party for the *pradhanam* which marks the first step in the marriage ceremonies. As the bride sits in presence of the caste elders and relatives, a lotus is simulated with betel leaves on a mattress spread before her and in the midst of it areca nuts are poured. Some *thambulam* fills the two joined hands of the bride and as she holds it steadily without letting even a piece fall down, symbolising the fullness and faultlessness of the family life she is going to lead, her maternal uncle places a yarn ring round her neck, publicly attesting his own approval of the marriage. In some parts of Andhra, the maternal uncle has to stand the test of passing a knife

between his fingers to raise the central finger apart from the adjacent ones and lifting, in that posture, a specific quantity of *thambulam* without dropping a single constituent. This is called *thonuku* (ripple or tilt) *thambulam* and is probably a practice that gauges the unreservedness of his approval. When after these ceremonies *thambulam* is distributed to all, any shortage of the material will reflect on the prestige of the groom's party. The headman of the bride's party who is in charge of the distribution, often teases them by doling out large quantities and exhausting the betels and nuts at a certain stage. The groom's men must have provided against such a contingency by hiding some *thambulam* which they now bring forth to augment the stock. If all that they have brought is exhausted midway without reaching all the people, the bride's people make great fun of their opposite and pull out the latter's shirts or upper clothes which, they demand, should be deposited there in lieu of further supplies of *thambulam.*

The marriage celebrated, the bridegroom comes to stay at the bride's place for a few days. During this short time he is expected to have extra feeding at his father-in-law's place and acquire extra strength. In some villages, as he is about to leave for his own place, he is asked to give an exhibition of his strength by lifting a round stone which is always kept at a central spot for this purpose. A kinsman privileged to cut jokes, challenges him to lift it. If he cannot lift it, he should deposit some *thambulam* on the stone by way of conceding his inability and imploring the other to withdraw his challenge. If he is able to lift it, the challenger gives him *thambulam* in recognition of the merit.

When a medicine-man, in the process of propitiation, draws a design on the ground, at every major intersection of the lines a little *thambulam* is deposited. When a dead body is being prepared to be carried to the burial ground, as a part of the final rites of homage, some betel leaves, arecanuts and lime are pounded in a small mortar and the compound is kept in the dead person's mouth. Whenever a prayer or propitiation is performed, thambulam forms an essntial part of the offerings made to the spirits and deities.

Courtesy Eastern Anthropologist (Lucknow).

WE RULE THE HOME AND THE VILLAGE

(Continued from page 22)

programme as explained in the budget's break-down for the current year :

Repairs for village chowks (choras), Rs. 3,000. Expanding the water tank, Rs. 1,000. Laying a cement or tar road in the village, Rs. 6,000. Cremation ground, Rs. 1,200. Children's recreation centre, Rs. 1,500. Public bathrooms and conveniences, Rs. 1,700. Besides these budget provisions, the all-woman Panchayat will also undertake work on building approach and link roads to the village and secure a larger building for the village school.

The election of an all-woman Panchayat unanimously in a region where the incidence of suicides among women is largest and where a large section of women are still socially and economically backward, is certainly a step towards emancipation of women in Saurashtra. Assisting the Panchayat is an educated women official of the Bombay Government; but all decisions are taken by the Panchayat itself. What was amusing to see was the woman official (who happens to be much younger than the majority of the Panchayat members) being treated as a junior around the house, whose opinions count but not as much as the experience and wisdom of the elected Panchayat members.

Mahendranagar is two miles from Morvi in Madhya Saurashtra District of Rajkot Division of Bombay State. It is inhabited by about 500 families and has about 1,400 acres of cultviable land. Cattle and agriculture are its main sources of revenue. The male members of the village, when asked what prompted them to elect an all-women Panchayat said that women could instil greater discipline and enthusiasm for the development programme.

(Based on a feature by R. V. Raman in the Times of India, *Delhi)*

Individual effort is as important as collective effort in our drive against poverty, ignorance and disease.—(Photograph : ICAR)

Young men and women—Gram Sevaks and Gram Sevikas—take a practical lesson in Public Health at the Fulia Extension Training Centre, West Bengal.
(Photograph : ICAR)

Printed by the Production Officer, United Press, Delhi-8, and edited and published by the Director, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi-8, on behalf of the Ministry of Community Development

egd. D—877